

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY



July 1987

This year's Report of Campus Ministry is made up of a collection of brief overviews of the year as seen through the eyes of the different members of the Campus Ministry team at Concordia.

Our team this year includes Matti Terho, Peter MacAskill (part-time), and myself as the old time remnants. New members are Daryl Ross, Peter Côté and Roslyn Macgregor (part-time) on the Loyola Campus, and on the Sir George Williams Campus Sr. Michaelena Bertone (part-time) and Rev. Bob Wismer (part-time). The whole held together by our secretary, Marie Hooper, and Loyola Chapel co-ordinator, Sandra DeRome.

There is an Appendix of the major events that were part of this year's programmes. For a new team they are considerable. The part that such a list doesn't show are the hundreds of hours spent in one-on-one listening, counselling, directing and the like.

I think even a cursory glance at this year's achievements will make you aware of why we feel extremely satisfied with what we were able to accomplish. We are looking forward to this year with the added excitement and vigor - with one year's work to encourage our vision and direction.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R Nagy", written over a horizontal line.

Robert Nagy
Director

Following are some of the events which took place during the 1986-87 school year:

at Belmore House

Christian Fellowship Bible Study
Scripture Course
Christian Fellowship Prayer Group
Weekly Meditation
Separated, Divorced, Widowed Catholics
Food for Thought Lecture Series
Thomas Merton Discussion Group
Skating with Blind Children
Shared Supper & Poetry
Shared Supper & Slide Show
Quakers Sunday Worship
Narcolepsy Association Meetings
Mardi-Gras Pancake Tuesday
Liturgy Committee Meetings
Bordeaux Prison Visits
Bible Study Series
Aurora Meetings
Amnesty International Concordia
Montreal Children's Hospital Visiting
Week of Directed Prayer
Annual Peace March
Women in the Church Discussion Group
Social Justice Committee Symposium
Christmas Basket Planning Meetings
Chinese Students Christmas Dinner
Theology Department Get-Together
Youth in Action Liturgy Camp Meeting
Carolling for Christmas Basket Drive
Theology Students End-of-Year Party
Benedict Labre House Meal Preparation
Viewing of film "Jesus of Nazareth"
Passover Seder
Refugee Committee Panel Discussion
Liturgy Pre-Camp Meetings
Diocesan Camp Meetings
Classics Department Dinner
FORUM '87 All-Day Meeting
Concordia Orchestra Party
Residence Staff First Aid Training
Reveillon
Chinese Baptist Church
Catholic Times Board Meeting
Michui - Lamb Roast
Philosophy Department Meet the Prof
Residence Thanksgiving Dinner
African Students Assn. Party

in Loyola Chapel

Welcome Sunday
Sacrament of Reconciliation
Dorothy Day - dramatic rendering
Readers' Workshop
Sebastian Moore Lenten Lecture
Stations of the Cross in Song & Dance
Canadian Quilters' Assn Mass & Slides
ConU Orchestra Xmas Basket Benefit
Ash Wednesday Service

Weddings & Rehearsals - 36
Baptisms - 28
Funerals - 4
High School Masses - 26

Suzuki Institute - August 3-7, 1987
Music Department Rehearsals - 54
Concerts - 41

Poetry Reading by Vincenzo Albanese

Holy Week Services
Week of Prayer Ecumenical Service
Weekly Ecumenical Service
Sunday Mass - 11 am & 8 pm
Weekday Mass - 12:05

I'll begin this reflection from a personal vantage point. It has been for me, a year of intensive learning, and challenge, sometimes exciting and exhilarating, and at other times overwhelming and perplexing. Through experience, experimentation, and ongoing professional development, I have acquired certain skills, and have also gained some understanding of the university campus, in all its pluralism, and multi-facetedness. Having begun the year in the fall with much enthusiasm but little time to prepare before we were in the thick of orientation and then the academic year, I look forward this summer to having the time and the experience to prioritize and define tasks and plan for the next year. My enthusiasm, I might add, is not at all diminished. I feel the university is an exciting and highly important area for ministry.

As a team, we worked well together. Bob Nagy on the Loyola Campus, and Matti Terho at Sir George Williams provided valuable support, experience and knowledge to our team. Peter Coté joined us in November and didn't miss a beat, taking on the major co-ordination of the Christmas Basket drive, which serves so well to join students, faculty and staff together to reach out generously to the community in which the university is situated. Marie Hooper, as our very capable and gifted secretary, and Sandra DeRome, as Sacristan, continued to add their very valuable talents and perspectives to the entire team. Ros Macgregor as part-time chaplain was a very welcome addition as well, and we were very pleased to see a successful ecumenical prayer service taking place weekly at the Chapel.

There were several opportunities for the entire team, including other part-time chaplains situated downtown, to meet together and plan some co-operative projects. Among the part-timers are: Bob Wismer, Anglican, new this year; Peter Macaskill, United, a long-time chaplain downtown; and Fran Polan, Roman Catholic, who left us this year to concentrate her attention on domestic needs. We have been joined this spring by Sr. Michelline Bertone, who brings many new ideas and valuable experience to the downtown campus.

Although I am a new member of the chaplaincy team, I have been part of both the university and the Loyola Chapel communities for a number of years, and it was obvious that the departure of Fr. Robert Gaudet, S.J. from campus ministry to his new position as director of Canadian Jesuit Missions was deeply felt. Anne Shore was also a very valued member of the team who is away on a three-year leave of absence, but she continues to give very valuable guidance as National Roman Catholic University Chaplain. We were especially fortunate that she had Concordia as her "home base," as she was available throughout the year to help us reflect on the directions of our ministry.

I felt it was very positive that Campus Ministry worked with CUSA during Orientation Week to provide information regarding Student Services to new students, and to sponsor a production by the Bread and Puppet Theatre. Another very successful theatrical production sponsored by campus ministry was the dramatic rendering of Dorothy Day's autobiographical "The Long Loneliness" by a theatrical group from Harvard University. Not to be forgotten in speaking of theatre, one of our own theatre department students

directed students and other chapel members in a very moving, original rendition of The Stations of the Cross during Holy Week.

The "Food for Thought" discussion series, which offers a forum for students to discuss topics informally with faculty, continued last year and was much appreciated.

The Prison Visits program was again positive, in its impact on students, the numbers involved, and the integration of the program into curriculum. Children's Hospital visits, new this year, were similarly successful.

A number of shared suppers, combined with poetry and music, provided opportunities for community building. The annual retreat at Oka also was positive in that area, with emphasis on God's call, and commitment to serving one another.

Our major guest speaker this year was Sebastian Moore. He gave very generously of his time. His presence was the occasion of large and small gatherings, bringing together members of several academic communities and many other interested people, in thoughtful discussion.

The third annual Week of Directed Prayer was very rewarding. This Lenten retreat done at home, guided through daily meetings with trained directors provided by the Ignatian Centre, affirms our links with the Centre, which we are so fortunate to have as a close neighbor.

Another project which joins students, staff and community is the Refugee Support group. This is an ongoing committee which intends to raise awareness of the plight of refugees, as well as to sponsor an Ethiopian refugee at Concordia.

These are some of the activities emanating from campus ministry which I see as highlights. Much of what we do is hard to reflect on in a report; it is simply the day by day contact with people, offering support, direction, hopefully helping people to articulate the appropriate questions.

Considering the turnover of staff at campus ministry, I feel it was a very good year. The challenges I see for next year lie especially in the areas of developing more student leadership, and working more closely with faculty to build a more thorough learning environment.

This year has been a year of new beginnings. We began with a whole new team. Anne Shore left her post for a three-year stint as National Chaplain and Bob Gaudet, S.J. left for a new position as director of the Jesuit Mission programme out of Toronto. Their departure, needless to say, has left a great vacuum. We had worked together as a team for eight years. There was a need, therefore, to look on ourselves as a totally new team. This was especially true for me as the sole remnant.

Despite the obvious difficulties of adjustments, expectations, and added stress, I believe it was a very good year and, considering the changes, an outstanding one. We not only carried on the usual from other years but added other events in spite of our loudest cautions to the contrary. We are all victims of the necessity to prove ourselves by increasing productivity.

I hope we are beyond that need so the next year together will also include some standing back and evaluating our ministry as a whole. Peter Coté and Daryl Ross are the new team members, Matti Terho returned from sabbatical renewed, and so there was a real freshness of language, image, and question. A decided factor to the ministerial presence of Peter and Daryl was their personal lives as married and as parents. This alone brought new problems of time management, also new questions.

Some of the highlights as I see them have been in the area of programming and new attempts at presence on the campus. Programming was a little more broadly based on both campuses, notably in the social concerns area of Prison Visits and a Children's Hospital program. Expanded co-operation in marriage preparation was a joy to see. Bread & Puppet Theatre was co-sponsored with CUSA as part of orientation. The Children's Hospital Visits were exciting new initiatives involving new people across the board. Co-operation with various levels of administration and staff held exciting possibilities, Residence students, students in Bio Phys Ed, students in Social & Religious Studies; Chris Jackson and Sherman Friedland joined efforts in Fund-raising and with the choir's participation in Sunday Service. Music and Drama students took initiative in a Holy Week presentation of The Way of the Cross that was one of the most powerful things students have done in this area with us. Some wonderful liturgical dance at services was a great bonus. Involvement in the first National Ecumenical and Bilingual Chaplain's Conference - a terrifying onus that wonderfully came together beyond our fondest hopes. It gathered 150 chaplains from coast to coast and especially satisfying was the presence of 50 or so francophone chaplains.

Our Guest Speaker of the second semester was Sebastian Moore, and this event was a great success in all its parts. The year was then topped off after the success of our Conference with one of our own being cited with an honorary doctorate, namely Fr. Gerard McDonough, founder of Student Services at Loyola.

Five students attended the Student Conference with me at Memorial University. Student Dance-athon and student poetry reading, sponsorship of an Ethiopian student, student Oka Retreat, student Skating with Blind, student collection and delivery of Christmas Baskets, student and faculty luncheon discussions, student and Prof. Emeritus Fr. Bedard Scripture study, all added up to

an exciting and varied program.

These, together with many hours of individual counselling and spiritual guidance, marriage preparation for students, faculty and staff, made for more than full days and nights.

Before concluding I must make special reference to additional assets this year. This year on the Loyola Campus we had the blessing of Roslyn Macgregor, as Anglican chaplain. She, more effectively than any member of her Church before, enabled weekly worship service and outreach to a varied spectrum of students that our confessional option (in spite of our ecumenical stance) hasn't been able to adequately satisfy. It was her efforts that were especially wonderful in the Children's Hospital Program and as co-ordinator for the conference (we hope she can stay). The second newness was the intermittent yet vibrant, flying returns of Anne Shore, on leave of Absence as National Chaplain for Roman Catholic Chaplains at Canadian universities. Her feedback from her cross-Canada visit to various university settings was a goldmine of information, ideas and encouragement.

All in all, it was an exhausting year and, in spite of certain false starts, a year that in all modesty we can affirm as beyond our dared-for hopes and expectations.

Personal Reflections on 1986-87

The 1986-87 year began for me on November 1, 1986 when I was hired on a temporary replacement basis for the balance of the school year; and on into June 1987. This contract has since been renewed for another year.

The hiring date and the terms of the contract both presented their problems and challenges. Needless to say being hired in the middle of the semester leaves one with little time, in fact no time, for advance preparation. My familiarity with Campus Ministry at Concordia through my years of involvement as a student helped to alleviate that particular problem. Additionally, I had already begun two programs earlier in the year as a volunteer which became natural parts of my duties as a full-time staff member. These are an Amnesty International group for students and an outreach program serving meals to the homeless at Benedict Labre House. Both these programs developed throughout the year and will continue in the new year. I feel they provide valuable opportunities for students to experience the world around them and to challenge some of the prevailing assumptions concerning life's priorities. The Benedict Labre House meals are particularly useful in this regard because they give students the opportunity to reflect on a side of this city few take the time to notice.

Another result of the hiring date was that I had a major project to move right into. Some years ago I served as student coordinator for the Christmas Basket Drive so it was logical that I should take that up again. For the balance of 1986 it became my major preoccupation. As has been the case for many years the Concordia community pitched in admirably. We always see a large number of volunteers from the ranks of students, staff and faculty. This past year about 100 individuals volunteered their services at one or another stage of the Drive, and the Drive was thus truly a community effort.

The prison visit program was a great success with two large groups visiting Bordeaux jail every week. Matti Terho and I each took responsibility for one group. After their initial nervousness and apprehension it was such a joy seeing the students come out of their first session with the inmates so excited and relieved about the experience. The attendance remained solid right through with excellent participation all around.

Many other programs, events and ongoing responsibilities kept me and my co-workers busy throughout the year. Amongst these was a discussion group I led on the writings of Thomas Merton. Coffee houses and shared suppers were well-attended and were interesting in terms of their variety: i.e., music evenings, poetry readings, slide shows. Our major retreat at Oka was well-attended and brought us into contact with several new students. Holy Week was even more hectic than usual as we added several new items to the already-packed menu. New in 1987 was a Seder supper, a Tenebrae service, and a dramatization of the Stations of the Cross. All three added significantly to the overall experience of Easter.

In June I attended a workshop in Guelph on Peer Helpers on Campus. We hope, in some way, to incorporate a peer ministry program into our schedule for the new year. It has been our feeling over the past year that student leadership and initiative has been low. We feel we have to work harder at fostering self-directed, self-motivated student leaders within our own area of service.

This past year has been an immense learning experience for me. My sense of ministry has been challenged and continues to grow and deepen. In many ways 86-87 was a year of building foundations, of experimenting and experiencing new avenues. The new year will be an opportunity to build on this.

I started working parttime in Campus Ministry at Loyola in November. It has been a wonderful experience, being part of the team, working and growing with encouraging, supportive people.

Most of the courses for my undergraduate degree were taken at the Sir George Williams Campus, and I was painfully aware of the sense of alienation felt by many who studied downtown. At Loyola, not only are there grass and trees, but a Chapel in the centre of the campus.

We began having a small Ecumenical Service on Tuesday evenings from 5:05-5:35 pm. The time was chosen to try to meet the needs of as many people as possible: students or staff at the end of the workday. The format of the services has been varied as we tried to include representatives of different denominations. John MacPhail, pastor of First Baptist Church, led the service three times. Matt Anderson, pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church came once, and Sister Emily Louise, an Anglican Nun, came with her guitar three times. The campus Intervarsity Christian Fellowship group was responsible for planning and leading the service twice, and two of the regular attenders, after some requested assistance in planning, also each took a turn. The St. Barnabas Church drama group presented a sermon-play entitled "Why Are People Hungry?" at which attendance far exceeded the usual 5 or 8 or 10 people.

Numbers are not large, but there is a sense of community developing, and it seems to meet a need for some students and staff. Two regulars, who work on campus, said at the last service in June that they were going to miss it over the summer, as it had been like an oasis for them in the middle of the week and a source of peace and strength.

I hope that next year, being more involved in the Theology Department as a student, I will discover more people who would like to participate in planning/leading the services or simply taking part.

The Children's Hospital visiting programme went very well. There were 18 people involved, most of whom were students. It was exciting to see the students respond, in varying degrees, to the needs of the children. At our meetings together, as a group or individually, they asked searching questions, for which there are no easy answers, reflecting openness and honesty. As not all of the students felt sure enough of themselves to work with chronic care patients, two other options were available to them: visiting on the orthopaedic floor or the baby unit. The students' earnestness and evident satisfaction was heartening. From February to mid-April, the group logged 410 hours of visiting.

Much of the ministry here is non-measurable, however, and has come about through meeting people in classes, at the library, or moving about on campus.

This past school year was indeed a very interesting one. For one thing I returned from my leave of absence in Europe with many experiences and lessons learned. In fact the research project I was involved with for the CCMWE (Churches' Committee on Migrant Workers in Europe) kept me busy still until late fall as I was putting together my report based on interviews with church workers in various European countries dealing with refugees, migrants and other minorities.

Our Campus Ministry was right in the middle of major changes in personnel, and it was a real challenge to get our programming started and all our activities organized while attempting to work on team building. And in retrospect I must say that we succeeded beyond all expectations on all counts. Even with very serious time restrictions and heavy demands on all of the chaplains we managed to take some time for reflection and team building. Hopefully the next year will allow more of the same and even more regularly.

In terms of our programming I feel we did extremely well under the circumstances. Both Daryl Ross and Peter Cote performed remarkably well without any major orientation or practice. They "dove" right into the assigned programs and allowed the major undertakings to be run as if nothing had happened. There were many pleasant highlights during the year, and I will only point out a few. Prison visits were very well attended and obviously much appreciated by both the students and the inmates - a real learning experience. The shared suppers were a fine opportunity to be a supportive community and at the same time to provide some interesting input (eg. I had a chance to share my visit to Egypt through slides). During the Easter season we had a very moving Passover Seder in the Belmore House with good attendance and meaningful input through the ceremony. There were numerous comments, both negative and positive, concerning the participation of the Chaplains in various convocations. That in itself is good, our presence and contribution is noticed..

Concordia Christian Fellowship, Moslem Student Association, Chinese Christian Fellowship and the Navigators have continued their activities within our area downtown.

One of the special projects this year was the Ecumenical National Bilingual University Chaplains' Conference. For the first time the colleges and CEGEP's were included and in both French and English sectors. It could be said that without the participation and contributions by Concordia Chaplains this conference could not have been held at McGill. The planning and organization took a lot of time and effort from every member of the organizing committee. Roslyn McGregor, who also worked part time at Loyola Campus Ministry, was the Co-ordinator of the conference, and did a marvellous job. Also her input into Campus Ministry should be underlined and emphasized with gratitude.

During the past year I participated and officiated in some eight weddings, four baptisms and five funerals, which naturally involved much more than just appearing at the chapel for the ceremony. On an average private marriage preparation consists of ten to fifteen hours of intense discussion and consultation, plus the time required for the rehearsal, ceremony and usually also the reception.

A few scattered items should perhaps also be mentioned. Campus Ministry participated actively in the Student Services Festival, Orientation, Sexual Harrasment Awareness group. We had a series of worship services for Advent and Lent at St. James the Apostle. We celebrated the Penultimate day of freedom, "farewelled" Bob Gaudet and Fran Polan with appropriate receptions. My own involvments also included participation in the Lutheran clergy association, the Montreal Jewish Christian Dialogue, selection committee for scholarships and awards, participation in many other special occasions, retirement etc. parties. I am in the process of familiarizing myself with my Finnish computer, which allows me access to word processing at home, and that of course makes some of my literary efforts so much more pleasant and easier.

In conclusion I look forward to another good year and hope that we will succeed in actively involving more students particularly in terms of leadership, and that we can find more time for our "days away" team building.